# SCHOOL BUS DRIVER SECURITY TRAINING PROGRAM

# COURSE OUTLINE



## New Mexico Surety Task Force
## New Mexico Department of Transportation
## New Mexico Public Education Department

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# SCHOOL BUS DRIVER
# SECURITY TRAINING PROGRAM COURSE OUTLINE

## Course Objectives:

*This course is designed to train school bus drivers on the knowledge and skills required to effectively identify and report perceived security threats as well as to appropriately react to actual security incidents if they occur.*

## Approximate Course Length:

*Three hours*

**MODULE 1:** **Introducing the Mission**

> *The introductory module explains the overall mission of the training and assists the trainees in coming to grips with their personal mission to protect themselves, the students and their community. Emphasis is put on the Six Basic Security Management Steps listed below and their importance.*

- Keep calm and assess the situation
- Contact supervision and, if necessary, emergency responders
- If required - evacuate, relocate or shelter in place
- Protect self and protect and assist the students
- Identify self to first responders if the situation dictates
- Follow school procedures and complete documentation

**MODULE 2:** **Defining the Threat and Risk**

> *This module is designed to set the stage for the training by describing the post 9-11 terrorist threat and to emphasize that the threat to our school systems goes beyond international terrorism to include "home grown" terrorists, criminals, "copycats" and mentally unstable individuals.*

- Post 9-11 world
- Defining terrorism
- International terrorism

- Terrorism within U.S. borders
- Criminal behavior
- Disgruntled workers and students
- Psychotic behavior
- Potential United States targets

**MODULE 3:** <u>**Targeting Schools, School Buses and Students**</u>

*This module relays to the trainees why the potential threat to our school systems exists and why they must take seriously the information presented in the training and incorporate it into their work lives.*

- School and school bus vulnerabilities
- Emotionally laden and symbolic target
- Nation-wide fear of loss of safety on school buses
- Potential for mass casualties
- Goal of demoralizing the State and Nation
- Accidental chemical release
- Existence of terrorists and availability of weapons

**MODULE 4:** <u>**Being the Eyes, Ears and Protector of the Community**</u>

*This module lays out for the trainees their role and responsibilities, as well as their unique qualifications, to protect themselves, their student passengers and their fellow citizens from violent attack and how, in general, they can provide such protection.*

- Neighborhood Watch program
- Drivers know their operating environment
- Trusting personal gut reactions
- Not replacing law enforcement
- Observing the unusual or out of place
- Reporting the unusual that appears suspicious
- Reporting any security weaknesses
- Protecting students and community
- Knowing all applicable security guidelines

**MODULE 5:** <u>Inspecting the Bus, Facilities and the Surroundings</u>

*This module emphasizes the importance of vigilance in the inspection of school system vehicles, facilities and environment in order to identify possible terrorist tools and prevent terrorist activity.*

- Pre-trip inspection
- Periodic inspection while in service
- Post-trip inspection
- Facility observation
- Changes in workplace environment
- School staging area observation
- Student pick up/drop off area observation
- Good housekeeping

**MODULE 6:** <u>Identifying and Reporting Unusual Behavior</u>

*This module is designed to assist trainees in identifying, reporting and reacting to suspicious or unusual behavior that they feel may represent a threat to security based on what an individual is doing, where they are doing it and when they are doing it.*

- The threat of unusual behavior
- The inaccuracy of profiling
- Characteristics of suicide bombers
- Unusual behavior related to clothing
- Unusual behavior related to anxiety
- Unusual behavior related to location and activity
- Unusual behavior related to time of day
- Unusual behavior related to repeated sightings
- Unusual behavior related to associated objects
- Remembering all identifying characteristics
- Interacting with suspicious people
- How to react

**MODULE 7:   <u>Identifying and Reporting Unusual Vehicles</u>**

*This module focuses on assisting the trainees in noticing any vehicle that could represent a threat, in assessing the real potential of that threat based on appearance, location and other factors, and reacting to that threat if they feel it is deserving of concern.*

- The vehicle threat
- Vehicle type concerns
- Vehicle appearance concerns
- Vehicle location concerns
- Repeated sightings
- Individuals associated with vehicles
- Remembering information about suspicious vehicles
- How to react

**MODULE 8:   <u>Understanding the Weapons</u>**

*This module provides background information on weapons that terrorists and other perpetrators have used in the past to attack targets, and on potential weapons that could be encountered by trainees in the future, along with the characteristics and destructive power of such weapons.*

- Terrorist weapons history
- Conventional weapons
- Explosive devices
- Suicide bombers
- Chemical weapons
- Biological weapons
- Radiological weapons

**MODULE 9:   <u>Reacting to Suspicious Items, Devices and Sounds</u>**

*This module teaches trainees to recognize physical characteristics and sensory signs of possible weapons and explains what steps they should take once these characteristics or signs have been identified.*

- The suspicious item and device threat
- Unusual appearance, configuration or attachments
- Substances seeping or releasing from an item
- Unusual location of the item or device
- Accompanying messages
- Accompanying sound
- Actions of individuals seen with an item
- Avoiding contact with suspicious items or devices
- Weapons observed or weapons use heard
- Explosions observed or explosions heard
- How to react

## MODULE 10: <u>Reacting to Dangerous Substances</u>

*This module very specifically describes signs and symptoms of chemical, biological or radiological release, whether occurring as a terrorist act or as an accidental event, and briefs school bus drivers on the critical actions required to save lives.*

- The dangerous substance threat
- Time, distance and shielding factors
- Unusual vapor, gas, mist, liquid, solid or powder
- Unusual odor in the area
- Dead or dying birds or animals
- Two or more people suffering the same symptoms
- Suspicious individuals, equipment or containers
- How to react

## MODULE 11: <u>Evacuating, Relocating or Sheltering in Place</u>

*This module emphasizes the importance of accurately reporting information to authorities regarding potential or actual security events and deciding upon and carrying out the appropriate evacuation, relocation or sheltering response.*

- Information gathering and reporting
- Locating the source of the threat
- Deciding to evacuate, relocate or shelter in place
- Securing the school bus against an outside threat
- Where to relocate the school bus
- How to evacuate the school bus
- Where to go after evacuation
- Being aware of secondary devices

## MODULE 12: <u>Managing the Students and the Scene</u>

*This module provides instruction to trainees on how to best interact with students and others in a security emergency situation, including the provision of assistance as may be necessary, and presents basic incident management techniques to be employed until first responders arrive.*

- How to communicate to students in an emergency
- Recruiting responsible students to assist
- Maintaining control of student behavior and location
- Assisting students as necessary
- Managing the incident scene
- Reporting to and supporting first responders
- Completing all necessary documentation

## MODULE 13: <u>Handling Conflict and Acts of Violence on the Bus</u>

*This module emphasizes the potential for individuals to carry out acts of violence on or around a school bus and describes the steps that trainees might employ in order to diffuse or escape such violence while protecting themselves and their student passengers.*

- Critical steps in handling conflict with non-students
- Steps to take in dealing with threats of violence
- Protecting self and students
- Reporting and documentation

## MODULE 14: <u>Dealing with a Hostage Situation</u>

*This module deals with the frightening potential of a school bus being taken hostage by terrorists or other perpetrators and explores possible strategies for communicating with the hijacker(s), alerting authorities, protecting self and others, and escaping.*

- Preventive measures at staging and pick up/drop off points
- Communicating with the perpetrator
- Diffusing the situation
- Taking actions to alert authorities
- Employing strategies to protect self and students
- Escaping the vehicle and the hostage taker(s)
- Reporting and documentation

## MODULE 15:  <u>Summarizing the Critical Issues</u>

*This final module reviews all the major issues discussed in the training and focuses on encouraging trainees to embrace their responsibilities as one of the school system's and the community's first lines of defense against terrorism and acts of violence.*

- The school bus driver as the first line of defense
- Threats of terrorism and violence
- Potential weapons that could be used
- Being the eyes and ears of the community
- Inspecting buses and surroundings
- Reacting to and reporting unusual behavior and vehicles
- Reacting to and reporting suspicious items and devices
- Reacting to and reporting dangerous substances
- Evacuating, relocating and sheltering in place
- Managing students and the incident scene
- Handling conflict and threats of violence
- Surviving a hostage situation

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Some of the information contained in this training course was created by Lazaro & Noel and some of it was researched from other sources.  These other sources include:


Anti-terrorism Advisory Council, Office of the US Attorney, New Mexico Division
Modesto Bee Newspaper, Modesto, California
National Transit Institute (NTI)
New Mexico Public Education Department
New Mexico Department of Public Safety
New Mexico Department of Transportation
United States Department of Education
United States Department of Homeland Security
United States Department of Transportation
 Video Communications